

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting March 23, 2000 2:30PM Room 433, Blatt Building

Members Present: Mr. Barnet, Mrs. Berry, Senator Bryan, Dr. Gummerson, Representative Harrell, Mrs. Hoag, Mr. Martin, Senator Matthews, Mr. McTeer, Senator Setzler, Mr. Smith, Mr. Spann, Mr. Staton, Mrs. Thompson, Representative Townsend, Mr. L. Wilson

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Barnet welcomed members and guests to the meeting. He noted the agenda was substantial and asked everyone for his or her patience.

II. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the February 17 meeting were approved as distributed.

III. Remarks from a Key Constituency

A. Mr. William Schenck, Fleet Mortgage, appeared before the Committee to discuss the partnership between Fleet Mortgage and Florence District Four. He introduced members of the Fleet team and Mr. Monroe Friday, Chairman of the Florence Four Board and Dr. Paul Vivian, Superintendent. Within the partnership, Fleet is providing the following:

- Technical assistance in financial matters;
- 70 mentors for students;
- assistance in the implementation of benchmark testing;
- Quarterly recognition.

He indicated that there is a major barrier produced by a "This too shall pass" attitude. He recommended increasing the number of teacher specialists, providing information systems and training to underperforming schools, and providing incentives for document teacher improvements.

B. Mrs. Edwina Carnes, SC Chamber of Commerce of Commerce, presented information on the High Performance Partnership Program. The program is funded by a GEAR-UP grant to the Commission on Higher Education. She described the variety of activities and the firms and schools involved. She commented on the following experiences:

- facilities;
- Lack of administrative leadership;
- Business frustration when schools do not follow through;
- Pockets of hopelessness.

IV. Subcommittee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessments: Mr. Wilson presented the changes the SDE has made in the social studies standards and moved for approval. The Committee approved.

Mr. Wilson discussed the accountability manual. He discussed the details in the manual. He asked for comments. He indicated that the Subcommittee is continuing to work with members of the SBE and other groups.

Members discussed concerns with the time line for implementation. Mr. Wilson indicated that he had asked for a monthly time line, reporting on the status of tasks in the EAA.

Senator Matthews asked if teachers had an opportunity to prepare students and cautioned against skewing the results. There was discussion of the "this too shall pass" issues. Mrs. Thompson indicated that there are some individuals who would never be ready. Members agreed that the time line should be met and that efforts to identify needed resources should be undertaken.

- B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms: Mr. Staton reported on behalf of the subcommittee. He asked for approval of an agreement with the Avery Institute at the College of Charleston to conduct a study of the teaching of black history. Two other studies are pending Advanced Placement and the Four-year-old program. The Avery agreement was approved.
- C. Public Awareness: Mr. Smith reported that the partnership with the SC Broadcasters' Association had been settled. He indicated that he would require an executive session to discuss the public awareness contract.
- D. Parental Involvement: On behalf of the subcommittee, Mrs. Thompson reported on the status of the parental involvement legislation in the Senate and the House. A subcommittee appointed by the Senate Education committee was reviewing and adjusting some of the language of the original proposed bill. No decisions had been made at that time. Mr. Barnett and Mr. Stefan Wilson co-authored a letter thanking those involved in the Senate and the House for co-sponsoring the introduction of the bills into those bodies. Mr. Wilson is working with the staff to continue the involvement of the Oversight Committee in the parental involvement arena and to insure that focus is maintained.
- E. Staff and Administration: No report

V. **General Discussion**

- A. Dr. Gummerson waived his time.
- B. Mr. Martin raised several questions regarding the testing of students with disabilities. Dr. Lindsay responded for the State Department of Education.

There was a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter.

The EOC rose from Executive Session.

Mr. Smith moved that the contract with Chernoff/Silver and Associates be extended by one year, in accordance with the provisions published in the original proposal. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50PM.